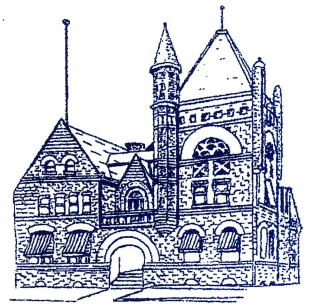




Nancy R. Rossi
Mayor

Office of the Mayor

City of West Haven
355 Main Street
West Haven, Connecticut 06516



City Hall
1896-1968

February 27, 2023

Senator Rick Lopes and Representative Joseph P. Gresko, Co-Chairs
Senator Jan Hochadel and Representative Christine Palm, Vice Chairs
Environment Committee
Legislative Office Building, Room 3200
Hartford, CT 06106

RE: Support for packaging EPR provisions of HB 6664, An Act Managing Waste and Creating a Waste Authority

Dear Co-Chairs Lopes and Gresko, Vice Chairs Hochadel and Palm, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nancy R. Rossi and I am the Mayor of the City of West Haven. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of the packaging EPR provisions of HB 6664.

For the past 50 years, local governments in Connecticut have assumed primary responsibility for the financial and management burden of handling the millions of tons of waste generated in the state each year. They face decisions about how to budget for increasing and fluctuating prices based on international markets for recycled materials. They rely on waste disposal capacity that cannot be guaranteed in the long-term. And they cannot control the types of materials used by consumer brands for packaging, which becomes a local government responsibility to manage, no matter how unrecyclable that material might be.

HB 6664 represents a policy solution for Connecticut that will change this scenario – it's called extended producer responsibility (EPR) – and it holds brand owners responsible for financing and managing their post-consumer packaging. Four states – Maine, Oregon, Colorado, and California – have already enacted packaging EPR laws and about a dozen others, like Connecticut, are considering such bills this year.

These laws have been successfully operating for over 35 years across Europe and over 15 years in Canada. They have increased recycling rates in those countries and provinces and provided sustainable financing. In fact, the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection recently issued a proposed update to the state's Comprehensive Materials Management Strategies report that estimates an EPR bill could save residents \$50 million in recycling expenses by 2028 and reduce Connecticut's in-state waste capacity deficit by up to 190,000 tons each year.

The passage of a packaging EPR law will provide options for Connecticut's local governments – to be reimbursed by packaging producers for their recycling costs, to have producers manage and pay for the collection and processing of their recyclables, or to continue with their existing system.

Packaging EPR does not raise prices for consumers. A study conducted by Resource Recycling Systems and funded by the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality analyzed consumer product prices before and after EPR legislation passed in Canada and found no evidence that they increased; in Europe, where programs have been in operation for more than three decades, producers themselves report that prices have also remained stable.

We strongly encourage Connecticut to adopt packaging EPR legislation so that our City of West Haven will no longer have to carry the financial burden of recycling the packaging chosen by brand owners.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this bill. Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at nrossi@westhaven-ct.gov or 203-937-3510.

Sincerely,



Nancy R. Rossi
Mayor